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RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KMDR](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: SPECIAL MEDIA REACTION: BLAIR'S VISIT TO THE MIDDLE EAST

¶1. SUMMARY: A columnist in "Al-Bayan" opines that Blair will face many obstacles from both the Israeli and the American sides, especially because Arabs have offered everything they can. "Al-Ittihad" published an op-ed written by former U.S. Ambassador to the UAE, William Rugh, in which he asks whether Blair will achieve a miracle in the Middle East. End Summary.

¶2. Under the headline "Blair and the Mission Impossible", columnist Hani Al-Jamal writes in a 07/29 op-ed in Dubai-based Arabic daily "Al-Bayan" (circulation 85,000):

"The road ahead of Blair is not rosy. He will face many obstacles from the both the Israeli and the American sides. His success will depend to a great extent on how well he uses his skills and international networks to convince Washington of the importance of acting practically and moving forward, especially because the Arabs have offered everything they can, including going to the Knesset to ask for peace."

¶3. Under the headline "Will Blair achieve a Miracle in the Middle East?", U.S. former diplomat William Rugh writes a 07/27 op-ed in Abu Dhabi-based Arabic semi-official daily "Al-Ittihad" (circulation 65,000):

"Blair still lacks the basic tools to solve the Middle East problem. For Blair to achieve any progress, he needs a miracle, which is possible only if he includes some of Hamas's leaders in the peace process."

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